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NSC BRIEFING

NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐

DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C

EXTENSION DATE:

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23 March 1960

VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

I. Riots of 21 and 22 March, unprecedented in violence in the Union, raise serious new security problems, with racial tension increasing between country's 3,000,000 whites and 12,000,000 non-whites.

A. At least 80 Africans killed and nearly 200 wounded at

Vereeniging, 30 miles south of Johannesburg; some reports put number of casualties much higher.

B. Reportedly 7 killed and 46 wounded near Cape Town.

C. Many Africans now staying away from work; two thirds of those in Cape Town are reported out on strike.

D. AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS HAS CALLED FOR NATIONWIDE WORK STOPPAGE MONDAY
II. Violence the result of a new campaign, led by newly formed Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), against identity card system for non-whites. (Identity card system is not new.)

A. Dynamic Pan-Africanists, led by Robert Sobukwe, a young ex-instructor at Witwatersrand University, broke with older African National Congress in April 1959.

B. Anti-Communist PAC seems to be replacing Communist-influenced National Congress as African spokesman in important areas of Transvaal and Cape provinces.

C. PAC program militantly anti-white, although present emphasis is on peaceful protests.

D. PAC reportedly maintains contact with other pan-Africanist groups in Accra.

III. South African whites will probably try to destroy Pan-Africanist organization's effectiveness and intimidate African population.

A. Army reserve has been partially mobilized.

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NOTE: Union's security forces and strengths are:

Police force	- 22,000
Army	- 2,500
Citizen Force (Army National Guard)	- 14,000
Air force	- 2,900
Navy	- 3,000

- B. Sobukwe and 131 other Pan-Africanists have been arrested and will be charged with sedition.
- C. Police officials say Africans must "learn their lesson the hard way."
- D. Whites buying up all available arms in Johannesburg area.
- E. Prime Minister Verwoerd refused to permit inquiry into riots, asserting it would be used as platform for agitators.
- IV. Growing African organizational ability and increasing white nervousness are almost certain to lead to more clashes.
 - A. One third of the 10,000 whites among 22,000-man police are estimated to be under 21, and heavy Afrikaner (Dutch descent) majority in the security forces is considered trigger-happy.
 - B. Security forces are believed capable of containing, but not of preventing, further isolated disturbances.
 - C. Much of current unrest stems from harsh application of apartheid legislation; a relaxation of some government controls could relieve tension considerably.
- V. Meanwhile, situation will be aggravated by critical world reaction.
 - A. Moscow radio says "blood of the dead" calls for intensified struggle against imperialism.
 - B. *Condemnation of imperialism from Paris, etc.*

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B. Nehru condemned shootings in statement before Indian parliament.

VI. We are in contact with relatively liberal European elements in the Union, in an effort to encourage bridging of ever-widening gap between the Africans and Europeans.

A. For the immediate future it seems doubtful that these elements can exert a significant influence.

B. We are still hopeful that something may be accomplished over a period of several years.

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